



August 2006

Dear Colleagues:

About this time of year everyone begins thinking about children going back to school and having a fresh start. This is why fall is the perfect time for early childhood professionals to think about career goals and aspirations. What training, certifications and degrees DO YOU HAVE that prepare you for being THE BEST early care and education teacher or director you can be? What competencies or skills DO YOU NEED TO LEARN so that you can be your BEST? What topics would you like to know more about?

Hopefully, this catalog will help you with answering many of your career goal needs. We invite you to take advantage of the many, low-cost training opportunities that will fulfill your training requirements and prepare you for your personal career growth. Below I have listed some highlights of professional development opportunities that may interest you.

1. EVERY CHILD READY TO READ and HOW CHILDREN LEARN are two new courses this fall! To read more, please see pages 17 and 19.
2. The Early Childhood Preschool Endorsement (ECPE) program is fully functioning this fall! This series of twelve courses (typically 4 hours each) will allow child care practitioners to learn foundational knowledge about working with preschool children, all the while becoming eligible to earn college credits that are equivalent to CHD 120 – Introduction to Early Childhood Education. For more information, please see pages 14-15.
3. The Read-A-Book Program is finally here! In conjunction with the Library of Virginia, the Virginia Department of Social Services created a new, self-paced reading program to earn training hours. This is an excellent opportunity to brush-up on your early childhood theory and practice techniques. For more information, please see page 24.
4. Thank you for your patience as Virginia undergoes some growing pains in early childhood. State agency leaders, along with state and national experts in early childhood, are developing a career-building infrastructure for Virginia's early childhood professionals. With provider input, we are developing early childhood program guidelines, core competencies and a career lattice for early childhood practitioners, and age-level endorsement programs with optional college credit.
5. Don't forget to check-out the Smart Beginnings Web site at: www.SmartBeginnings.org. There is a whole section for Professionals, including other training and development resources. Individuals may sign-up to receive email updates on early childhood initiatives under "Get Involved".

Other Notable Items:

1. Early Childhood Professionals' Recognition Day is now the Friday before Mother's Day each year, to be in alignment with the National Early Childhood Professionals' Day. Thank you for your contribution on this Day and every other!
2. Don't forget to check out the VDSS Child Care and Development Web site, which includes this catalog and the TIPS Calendar at <http://www.dss.virginia.gov/redirect/?83>.
3. If you plan to take college-level courses, think about using the Virginia Child Care Provider Scholarship Program. For more information, please call toll-free 1.866.636.1608, or go to <http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/cc/scholarship.html>.

You are making a positive difference every day in the lives of our children. It is my hope that you would take time to plan for your career aspirations just as you would plan the daily activities for the children. I wish you the best of luck with your career goals.

Sincerely,

Kathy D. Gillikin, Quality Child Care Program Manager
Division of Child Care and Development, Virginia Department of Social Services

VDSS Mission:

*People helping people triumph over poverty, abuse and neglect
to shape strong futures for themselves, their families and communities.*

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